

hear an East Indian sing his love song. We not only heard that on this evening, but also the singing of a folk song by two East Indian students. It was especially interesting to pick up the definite dancing, swinging rhythm in the folk song which seemed to be basic to the universal urge to dance. The Hollanders followed in quick succession with their shiny flower decorated bicycles, a tulip cart (in which a tulip bud opened and became a small bright girl), singing, and the dancing of the Wooden Shoe Dance and a schottische. The clatter of the wooden shoes had not died before the Czechs began piling out to celebrate May Day. They brought their ribbon-trimmed tree, their little children, their best national costumes, and their Sokol Gymnastic Organization, and drilled and danced to everyone's heart's content. By this time the evening was nearing its close and the Square suddenly became alive with 400 hundred persons (representing 58 organized square dance groups), doing two square dances, dancing as a unit for the first time. 'Twas a sight to behold!

Sunday afternoon's program was geared especially to an attempt to emphasize the many religious contributions to America by all its people, pointing up the freedom of worship. The religious beginnings of the country, with the Puritans, the Indians, the Catholics, the story of Juda Touro, etc., with pantomimes showing the meaning of some of the symbolism of the dress, holidays, and rituals in the Catholic Church and the Synagogue were presented with accompanying music and narration. Very special commendation should certainly go to the narrators who did a very splendid job at the microphone and helped to make the pantomimes vital and dynamic. While I enjoyed the entire program, I wished the mechanics of lighting effects had been more automatic,—and I wanted to join in singing the hymns too (only for the massed chorus)! I shouldn't admit it, but I could not resist singing the Hallelujah chorus as the choirs did. It would be fatal ever to invite a whole audience to join in singing this, but I have done it with an organized group often and long enough not to sing out an extra "ha" on a rest!

Sunday evening (the last of the four days) brought music from the Germans, Hora Stacatto, Hora Unirii, Hora Saraceni, and Invarita from the Romanians (all beautifully done), and music from the Finns. Naturally, this latter program would not have been complete without a rendition of the very lovely Finlandia, which they did most acceptably. The Greeks came next and gave to us Greece herself, the dancing Muses, Orpheus and his lute, and a tiny little Evzone. Beautiful as this was, we had to turn next to three groups who came to represent the World at Play. Just near the Town Hall was a group doing jiu-jitsu, in the center another demonstrating judo, and at the far end a couple of small boys doing ordinary everyday wrestling, American style. All three groups were most intriguing to watch but the small boys just about stole the show. Many wished that these numbers had not been put on simultaneously because each was worth the audience's undivided attention. Just as soon as the small boys could be disentangled from each other they made way for the Croatians to do three dances—Plavojica, (a polka for processional), Drmes (a dance popular in Croatian villages for over 1,000 years), and the Kolo (a festival dance, used as a recessional). These were done very acceptably. The Filipinos came next, rendering folk and love songs, followed by the Itailans with two folk songs and a dance (Quadriglia, which had its origin in the French Ballet).

For all the months of strenuous work in planning and organizing the huge festival, for all the effort involved in securing necessary foreign foods from abroad, as well as some of the properties, for all the inconveniences in

finding spaces enough for the various dance rehearsals (the square dancers—58 groups combined, had to have one out in the street because all space in the building was in use by other groups), for all the headaches involved in getting 8,000 people of varying ideas and temperaments to work together smoothly and promptly (for no delays occurred in the action from group to group), and for all the joys of the finished product—this review is feeble and mild! The one single gesture to formalize the unity of all these groups came before each program when, after they were presented to the Chairman and President of the Institute, they were drawn together by multi-colored streamers to the center of the Square as the huge Dove of Peace was lowered and hovered over them. I wished this dove had seemed more alive so that the audience would not have been so tempted to smile instead of actually feeling the depths of the symbolism portrayed, and I wished too, that there had been a more formal termination of the Festival on Sunday night, pointing up again the idea of unity in spite of all the diversity portrayed for four days! Perhaps one was supposed to find it in the gradual infiltration of audience into the circle dancing (led by the editor of Folk Dance Magazine) which marked the end. The group was certainly a blended one, yet, I believe the symbolism was too subtle. I went away feeling that that part was an anti-climax and a big chance had been missed to emphasize the singleness of the goal of peace and harmonious living of all Americans regardless of because of origin or background. Maybe a more pronounced central theme would have helped. But in spite of this, the Festival was a tremendous undertaking, a great adventure in undertaking, and a great success. One special guest, Dr. Cebe-Habersky (Czech delegate to the UNO) viewed it with much pleasure and amazement. Perhaps the UNO will have soon to help St. Paul find a new site for the next Festival of Nations, for it has now outgrown the Public Auditorium Arena!



DANISH DANCERS FROM TORONTO, CANADA, whose perfect rhythm and graceful dancing were highlights of the National Folk Festival. A group of 23 dancers arrived and danced under the direction of Mr. John Madsen. (Photo — Belmont Studio)



PETITE BALLERINA, GENEVIEVE GIEDRAITIS, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Giedraitis, who boast of singers and organists on both sides of the family, and that included the mother, a singer of note and an organist at St. David's church, was the star of a recent recital sponsored by Bernice Holmes. The recital was composed of the Junior Ballet students, all under 15 years of age, and held at the St. Alphonsus Auditorium. Of the entire bevy of dancers, she and the two boy dancers shone above all other diminutive stars. Every step and every movement in her body and every expression in her face told the audience that this eleven year old lassie has great promise and under proper training will delight audiences in concert halls of the near future. On the afternoon's program she soloed in the Mazurka from Les Sylphides, Pursuit from Les Petits Riens (Mozart), Diamond Fairy and Csardas; in two duets and a sextet.

Genevieve is a third generation American of Lithuanian stock and speaks Lithuanian beautifully; in fact, she had the leading role in a Lithuanian children's operetta "Sidabrinis Batelis" (The Silver Slipper) and was acclaimed the star. She started her ballet studies at the age of six with Laurent Novikoff and was his first student ever to be accepted at that age, as his age limit was set to 9 years old and over. When he left Chicago to direct the Metropolitan Opera Company she went to Miss Holmes and even there she showed such remarkable progress that she passed all the children's classes and has been in the professional class with people much older than herself. Besides all of that she is a charming little lady and endowed with beauty and this picture doesn't lie. More power to you, Gene.

"Does your wife miss you much?"

"No, she throws remarkably straight for a woman."

ORGANIC FOLK DANCE TEAM

Members of the folk dance team of the School of Organic Education, Fairhope, Ala., with their director James R. Lowell and Mrs. C. A. Gaston, faculty member, took part in the 13th Annual Folk Festival, May 21 to 24 at the Kiel Auditorium, St. Louis, Mo. During that time they appeared on six programs and were selected by Sarah Gertrude Knott, director of the Festival to officially represent the International Folk Festival in Toronto, Canada, June 8 to 15. The other team chosen to share this honor with them was the Lithuanian group of Chicago, and director, V. F. Beliajus, former Organic instructor. At the last performance Mayor Kaufman, of St. Louis came back stage to visit Mr. Lowell and ask him to convey his appreciation to the Fairhope dancers for their fine performances.

Dancers were Marie Wallace and Mary Catherine Smith, who remained in St. Louis for a several days visit with relatives: Gloria Reuter, Mary Emma Arnold, Joyse Egan, Emily Joe Bradford, Tommy Nichols, Fred Kaufman, Billy Joe Godard, J. D. Stapleton, Roy Reynolds, David Rockwell, Roy Murrell, who went on to visit a brother Eugene Murrell in Des Moines, Iowa, and David Campbell, a faculty member.

The Folk Festival which is sponsored by the Associated Retailers of St. Louis is headed by Sarah Gertrude Knott, founder and director. Officers are Paul Creen, president; Homer P. Rainey, vice-president; Major M. J. Pickering, business manager.

THE ALICE STEPHENS SINGERS

The annual concert of the Alice Stephens Singers at Orchestra Hall, the realization of a long-time wish of this group of "white collar girls", brought to an audience which was not particularly appreciative, a strange concatenation of good and bad things in ensemble singing. On the credit side are (1) a charming appearance augmented by the grouping of the girls so that they were divided into almost equal thirds of blue, white and pink gowns; (2) interesting instrumental effects in the use of staccato singing in some spots; and (3) surprisingly broad range of dynamics from a lovely whispering softness to rich resonance resembling Phil Spitalny's All Girl Choir of radio fame. The debit side is large, but most of these details could be corrected with a little attention and patience. Clear articulation of words, clarity of tone and pitch were sacrificed to novel staccato effects. Unfortunately, the group has fallen into the habit of flattening constantly, but perhaps the worst fault, and the others may stem from it, was the poor choice of selections, except for the Lithuanian series. A suite of Brahms Waltzes originally intended for mixed chorus, opened the program; it was not a good opening in spite of the two pianos used for accompaniment; fortunately the words were reproduced in the printed program, for they were not understandable as sung; the English translation used was bad, ungrammatical and uninspired. The Lithuanian songs were well done — the majority of chorus members are Lithuanian — and displayed an authentic folk spirit. The first group of songs of the second part of the program were especially unfortunate. The bit of polka from Weinberger's SHWANDA did not fit with the rest of the set. Debussy's CLARE DE LUNE loses much of its charm when telescoped into the restricted range of the voice, and the lyrics set to it are not very appropriate. Rossini's LA DANZA was sprightly and attractive, but the too consistent use of staccato on high notes prevented accuracy of pitch and eliminated a real sense of artistry. Rubinstein's (sic.) SERAPHIC SONG suffered from the same limitations as the CLARE DE LUNE — piano